

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended)

A method for maintaining and restoring hair color in an animal, comprising the steps of:

(a) adding an effective amount of a directly available amino acid selected from the group consisting of tyrosine, phenylalanine and mixtures thereof to an animal consumable product having at least one indirectly available amino acid therein to produce a supplemented consumable; and

(b) feeding an efficacious amount of said supplemented consumable to ~~the~~ an animal selected from the group consisting of cats and dogs to maintain and restore hair color in the animal.

Claim 6 (currently amended)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said effective amount of directly available tyrosine comprises ~~is~~ at least approximately 0.05% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 7 (currently amended)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said effective amount of directly available tyrosine comprises ~~is~~ at least

approximately 0.10% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 8 (currently amended)

A method of ~~providing for the genetic potential of a cat for hair melanin synthesis in the cat by maximizing the hair melanin synthesis~~ promoting in an animal the synthesis of hair melanin comprising:

~~providing a cat having the capabilities of hair melanin synthesis; and~~

~~feeding the cat~~ an animal selected from the group consisting of a cat and a dog a nutritional diet comprising more than ~~about~~ 0.50% by weight of an amino acid selected from the group consisting of tyrosine, phenylalanine, and mixtures thereof, ~~to maximize hair melanin synthesis in the cat to promote in the animal the synthesis of hair melanin.~~

Claim 9 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from ~~more than~~ about 1.65% by weight to ~~less than~~ about 2.40% by weight of said amino acid ~~to maximize the hair melanin synthesis in said cat.~~

Claim 10 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.80% by weight of indirectly available amino acid.

Claim 11 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 9 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.80% by weight of indirectly available amino acid.

Claim 12 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.70% by weight of directly available amino acid.

Claim 13 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 9 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.70% by weight of directly available amino acid.

Claim 14 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 10 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.70% by weight of directly available amino acid.

Claim 15 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 11 wherein said nutritional diet comprises more than ~~about~~ 0.70% by weight of directly available amino acid.

Claim 16 (original)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 17 (original)

A method of Claim 9 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 18 (original)

A method of Claim 10 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 19 (original)

A method of Claim 11 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 20 (original)

A method of Claim 12 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 21 (original)

A method of Claim 13 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 22 (original)

A method of Claim 14 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 23 (original)

A method of Claim 15 wherein said amino acid comprises a mixture of phenylalanine and tyrosine.

Claim 24 (original)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said amino acid comprises phenylalanine.

Claim 25 (original)

A method of Claim 9 wherein said amino acid comprises phenylalanine.

Claim 26 (currently amended)

A method of Claim 8 wherein said animal comprises a cat ~~is~~ less than about 1 year old.

Claim 27 (currently)

A method of Claim 9 wherein said animal comprises ~~eat~~ ~~is~~ an adult cat.

Claims 28-32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (currently amended)

A method of ~~allowing expression of the genetic potential of an animal for hair melanin synthesis in the animal by maximizing the hair melanin synthesis~~ promoting in an animal the synthesis of hair melanin comprising:

feeding an animal selected from the group consisting of a cat and a dog a nutritional diet comprising from about 0.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of a bioavailable amino acid selected from the group consisting of tyrosine, phenylalanine, and mixtures thereof, for ~~maximizing hair melanin synthesis in the animal~~ promoting in the animal the synthesis of hair melanin.

Claims 34-36 (canceled)

Claim 37 (new)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said directly available amino acid comprises more than 0.70% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 38 (new)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said indirectly available amino acid comprises more than 0.80% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 39 (new)

A method according to claim 37, wherein said indirectly available amino acid comprises more than 0.80% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 40 (new)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said directly available amino acid comprises more than 0.20% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 41 (new)

A method according to claim 5, wherein said directly available amino acid comprises a bioavailable amino acid.

Claim 42 (new)

A method according to claim 41, wherein said bioavailable amino acid comprises from about 0.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 43 (new)

A method according to claim 41, wherein said bioavailable amino acid comprises from about 1.00% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 44 (new)

A method according to claim 41, wherein said bioavailable amino acid comprises from about 1.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 45 (new)

A method according to claim 41, wherein said bioavailable amino acid comprises from more than 1.65% by weight to less than 2.40% by weight of the supplemented consumable.

Claim 46 (new)

A method according to Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from about 0.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the amino acid.

Claim 47 (new)

A method according to Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from about 1.00% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the amino acid.

Claim 48 (new)

A method according to Claim 8 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from about 1.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the amino acid.

Claim 49 (new)

A method according to Claim 33 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from about 1.00% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the bioavailable amino acid.

Claim 50 (new)

A method according to Claim 33 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from about 1.50% by weight to about 3.00% by weight of the bioavailable amino acid.

Claim 51 (new)

A method according to Claim 33 wherein said nutritional diet comprises from more than 1.65% by weight to less than 2.40% by weight of the bioavailable amino acid.